

# Texas Death Certificates Quick Reference Guide

## General

- After you have completed a work package, scroll down the columns in the green section to make sure you have made all corrections. It is easy to see some things that were missed when you look at the columns this way.
  - Look for misspellings, transposed letters, or missing letters on the end of words.
  - All name fields on the certificate where writing is unreadable should have a “\*” entered for a combination of unreadable letters and/or a “?” for one unreadable letter.
  - DO NOT use periods after abbreviations or initials.
  - Signs and characters:
- | <i>Symbol</i> | <i>Replacement</i>                          |
|---------------|---|
| Slash “/”     | Type a space                                |
| Hyphen “-”    | Type a hyphen with no space before or after |
- | <i>Symbol</i>   | <i>Replacement</i> |
|-----------------|--------------------|
| Ampersand “&”   | Type “and”         |
| Number Sign “#” | Type “number”      |
- Refer back to the Quick Reference Guide to refresh your memory if you have not reviewed in a while.
  - SLOW DOWN, take your time; quality, not quantity is the goal.

## Death County

- Enter correct county if a mistake was made in the original indexing or this field is blank

## Race

- Capitalize and expand abbreviations.
- DO NOT change “Colored” or “Negro” or “Negroid” to “Black.”
- L A is Latin American. A S is Anglo Saxon.

## Informant’s Name Prefix

- Choose from the drop-down list or type prefix if it is not in the list. For example, type “Miss” or “Rev.”
- Capitalize this field.

## Informant’s Given Name

- Type names as they are written. If middle name or initial is give, type in this field.
- Make sure the name typed in this field is the Informant name and not the deceased person’s name. The Informant reported the death to the authorities.
- Use upper and lower case.
- DO NOT expand abbreviations or correct misspellings.
- Include aliases, nicknames, or variant names separating them with “OR.”
- DO NOT type terms that are not a person’s name. For example: “Hospital Records” or “Personal Effects.”

## Informant’s Surname

- Type names as they are written.
- DO NOT assume the surname from other names on the certificate.
- Maiden names should be typed in this field before the current surname.

## Burial Month

- Choose the month from the drop-down menu or begin typing the month and choose month when it appears.

## Burial Day

- Type the one- or two-digit date.

## Burial Year

- Type in the four-digit year. If you type a number outside of the project parameters or a letter in the field, the program will automatically default to 1976 (the last year of the project). Please check dates carefully.

### **Burial Town, City, and County**

- Type what is recorded on the certificate. Use a comma to separate city or town and county.
- Expand abbreviations.
- DO NOT type “County” in this field.

### **Burial State**

- Type what is recorded on the certificate.
- Expand abbreviations.
- DO NOT type the state if it is not listed on the certificate for the burial location.

### **Cemetery**

- Type the cemetery name and include “Cemetery” if it is included in the name.
- Expand abbreviations and correct misspellings when you can tell what the correction should be.
- DO NOT add the word “cemetery” if it is not recorded on the certificate
- DO NOT include “City” and “State” with cemetery name
- Do not put name of private or university medical hospital, medical school, or other medical facility where the body is donated for research in the cemetery field, except SAB (see below).
- Some State Hospitals do have cemeteries associated with them, so their cemeteries would be listed in this field.
- Cemetery Abbreviations: Cem – Cemetery  
U B of F – United Brothers of Friendship  
WOW – Woodmen of the World  
SAB – State Anatomical Board  
FIS – Farmers Improvement Society
- IOOF – Independent Order of Odd Fellows  
KofP of KOP – Knights of Pythias  
GMP – Galveston Memorial Park  
IOBA – Order of Brith/Bnai Abraham

### **Funeral Home**

- Type the Funeral Home name as recorded on the certificate.
- Expand abbreviations and correct misspellings when you can tell what the correction should be.
- Make your own listing of funeral homes and funeral directors to refer back to.
- Most Texas funeral homes are family owned and often have an “Our History” or “Our Story” section on their website. You can use Google and often find old funeral home names and funeral director names in this section.
- Funeral Home Abbreviations  
SAUEC or SAU&E Co – San Antonio Undertaking and Embalming Company  
Und – Undertaking  
Mort – Mortuary  
Bro – Brother  
Inc – Incorporated
- F H – Funeral Home  
Bros – Brothers  
Co – Company  
Emlg -- Embalming

### **Funeral Director/Undertaker**

- Look for the Funeral Director’s name or Undertaker’s name either written or typed on the certificate near the Funeral Home or instead of Funeral Home name. Type the given name and surname in the appropriate fields.
- DO NOT expand abbreviations.
- DO NOT include titles, terms, prefixes, or suffixes.
- If you have problems confirming a funeral director’s name, look at all of the certificates in the work package where he or she signed to find the most legible signature.
- Check the Texas Licensing Website to see if a funeral director was listed to verify the name. Since most funeral homes are family owned, they often have generations of family members working at the funeral home. You can often find last names that are multi-generational, and sometimes you can find a name that has a Junior listed to verify a funeral director from the time period of the death certificate. You can search for Name, County, or License Number. Link: <https://vo.licensing.hpc.texas.gov/datamart/selSearchType.do>

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